

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 04928 151448Z

43

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

/055 W

----- 121043

R 142204Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8590

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

CONFIDENTIAL TEGUCIGALPA 4928

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

GUATEMALA PASS ROCAP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: CABINET ACTIVITIES

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 4843

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE CABINET IS ONCE AGAIN MEETING AFTER A MONTH LONG LAPSE. IT IS BEING FORCED TO DEAL WITH A LARGE AMOUNT OF ACCUMULATED BUSINESS INCLUDING THE PREPARATION OF THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE AGRARIAN REFORM LAW. LABMIN FONSECA WANTS TO RESIGN BUT CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ HAS NOT YET ACCEPTED HIS RESIGNATION. THE CALLING OF CABINET MEETINGS IS PROBABLY LOPEZ' REACTION TO CRITICISM ABOUT THE LACK OF GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY AND DIRECTION. END SUMMARY.

1. POLOFFS HAD CONVERSATION WITH MINLAB FONSECA ON NOVEMBER 14. FONSECA SAID THAT FULL SCALE CABINET MEETINGS WERE AGAIN TAKING PLACE AFTER A LAPSE OF A MONTH. HE

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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 04928 151448Z

CONFIRMED THAT THE FAILURE OF THE CABINET TO MEET WAS A RESULT

OF THE OCTOBER 11 SESSION IN WHICH  
FONMIN BATRES' MEDIATION PROPOSAL WITH EL SALVADOR  
HAD BEEN REJECTED AND BATRES, AS A CONSEQUENCE, HAD RESIGNED.

2. FONSECA SAID THAT THE CABINET WAS HOLDING LONG MEETINGS  
IN AN ATTEMPT TO COPE WITH THE LARGE AMOUNT OF ACCUMULATED  
BUSINESS. HE SAID THAT THE CABINET WOULD BE HOLDING CONTINUOUS  
SESSIONS IN THE COMING WEEK IN AN ATTEMPT TO PRODUCE A FINAL  
DRAFT OF THE NEW AGRARIAN REFORM LAW. HE SAID THAT THE MOST  
DIFFICULT PARTS HAD BEEN COMPLETED AND HE EXPECTED ITS  
COMPLETION IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

3. FONSECA AGAIN EMPHASIZED HIS DESIRE TO LEAVE HIS POSITION.  
HE RECALLED THAT HE HAD TOLD CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ ON THREE  
SEPARATE OCCASIONS THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO REMAIN. HIS  
RESIGNATION WAS ORIGINALLY MOTIVATED BY THE "DOUBLE-CROSS" OF  
BATRES. HOWEVER, HE NOW FEELS THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE THE  
MINISTRY AS WELL AS BE COUNTRY IN ORDER TO ESCAPE THE CONSTANT  
PRESSURES AND THREATS TO WHICH HE IS SUBJECTED. FONSECA POINTED  
OUT THAT HE COULD NOT LEAVE HIS POSITION UNILATERALLY BECAUSE  
IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO DO SO WITHOUT THE CHIEF OF STATE'S  
CONSENT. HE EXPRESSED HIS BEWILDERMENT AT LOPEZ' LACK OF ACTION.

4. COMMENT: LOPEZ' CALLING THE CABINET TOGETHER IS  
PROBABLY HIS RESPONSE TO INCREASED CRITICISM THAT THE  
GOVERNMENT IS DRIFTING WITHOUT DIRECTION. THE CABINET  
MEETINGS AT LEAST SHOW THAT THE TOP LEVEL LEGISLATIVE/  
EXECUTIVE BODY IN THE COUNTRY IS OPERATING. LOPEZ'  
RELUCTANCE TO REPLACE MINISTERS IS TYPICAL OF HIS PAST  
PERFORMANCE WHETHER AS DE FACTO CHIEF OF STATE OR CONSTITU-  
TIONAL PRESIDENT.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CABINET, MEETINGS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 14 NOV 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** cunninfx  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974TEGUCI04928  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740330-0616  
**From:** TEGUCIGALPA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Line Count:** 93  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** TEGUCIGALPA 4843  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** cunninfx  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 SEP 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <13 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CABINET ACTIVITIES  
**TAGS:** PINT, HO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005